

This resumé ~~has~~ been prepared in response to your request for information about the proposed Rooming House Ordinance for Newark. This ordinance is pending before the Municipal Council and, therefore, is still subject to further modification.

NEWARK COMMISSION FOR NEIGHBORHOOD  
CONSERVATION AND REHABILITATION

OCTOBER 3, 1959.

Highlights of Proposed  
Rooming House Ordinance

What is a rooming house?

It is a dwelling in which either three or more rooms are rented or available for rent or where rooms are rented to three or more persons.

Do housing code regulations apply to rooming houses?

Yes, with a few exceptions.

Who is responsible for rooming houses complying with the law?

Persons who run a rooming house (operators) and persons who own the rooming house (owners) even if they do not also operate the rooming house, where the owner knows of the violation or has received notice of it.

What are the general responsibilities of owners and operators?

To see that the rooming house complies with the code requirements of the City of Newark and that the rooming house is licensed.

What is the time schedule for licensing?

All rooming houses must apply for licensing before January 1, 1960 and inspections are to be completed and licenses issued by January 1, 1961. Operation of a rooming house where no application is made by January 1, 1960, after that date is illegal as is operation without a license after January 1, 1961.

What is the license fee? What is the term of the license?

\$15.00 for three rooming units or less and \$5.00 for each additional unit per year; the fee shall be calculated and the license issued on a two year basis.

Are there any additional costs?

Yes if more than one reinspection is required on an application, there is a charge of \$10.00 for the second reinspection and each subsequent reinspection.

Grounds for issuing licenses?

Where the rooming house complies with the provisions of the housing code and the zoning code and the owner has never been convicted of an offense involving moral turpitude. Where there is such a conviction, the application may be rejected.

How is the license renewed?

Upon application no later than sixty days before the end of the license period. The license will be renewed if the rooming house premises comply with the applicable ordinances of the City and if neither the owner nor operator has been convicted of a violation of the city's codes arising out of the operation of the rooming house, nor been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude.

What special facilities are required in rooming houses?

Bathroom and toilet facilities.

There must be one bath or shower, toilet and washbasin connected to running hot and cold water for every six persons except in rooming houses for men only, where flush urinals can be substituted for up to one half of the required number of toilets. All facilities must be located in a private room on the same floor or on a floor no more than one story above or below the rooms to be served by them.

Heating- must be by central heating which means a heating system physically separate from the areas which it heats.

Bedding, mattresses, mattress covers, bed linens, blankets, pillows, towels and soap must be supplied by the operator in a clean and sanitary condition. Bed linens and towels must be supplied fresh to each new occupant and changed once a week.

Generally sanitary and clean conditions are required at all times and there must be someone designated by the owner or operator as being responsible for keeping the rooming house clean and for garbage disposal.

License is to be posted at front entrance of the rooming house.

Guest register showing names of all guests must be kept in ink. Registration under false names is prohibited.

Rooms are to be numbered.

Children cannot live in rooming houses except for students over 18 years of age living away from home and children who are under the care of the operator of the house and eat one meal a day prepared by the operator.

What are the fire prevention requirements?

That there be at least two properly located stairways (or instead of a second stairway a fire escape) for each floor and

where there are four or more stories each room must have a fire escape directly available to that room.  
That there be illuminated directional signs in the hallways showing where the stairway or fire escapes are.  
That there be a fire extinguisher on each floor and next to the central heating equipment.  
That there be signs prohibiting smoking in bed.  
That doors from rooms to hallways be self-closing.  
That there be an adequate fire alarm system.  
That there be an adequate fire detection system.

What about cooking in rooming houses?

Community kitchens, that is kitchen facilities available in common to two or more rooms rented separately is prohibited. Cooking in sleeping rooms with electrical appliances only is allowed if the Electrical Bureau determines that the installation and circuits are safe. Such rooms must be 25% larger in floor area than the sleeping room requirements in the housing code generally.

Where cooking is done, there must be minimum sanitary facilities which include sink and drain board, refrigeration and storage facilities, adequate ventilation and washable container for garbage disposal.

Where there is cooking in a room, then no more than two persons can occupy the rooming unit.

What is the penalty for violations?

For the first violation the fine may be anywhere from \$2.00 to \$100. for each offense. Each section of the ordinance that is violated is a separate offense and each day the offense continues is considered a separate offense.

A willful violator convicted twice in six months may be given a jail sentence.

Are Boarding Houses allowed?

Yes a boarding house which is a rooming house where the operator only cooks and serves food to guests (but guests do not themselves use the kitchen) is expressly permitted.

Do occupants of rooming houses have any responsibilities?

Yes, just as occupants of all types of housing do under the housing code. The code generally prohibits tenants from

living in premises or conducting themselves in a way that does not meet the standards of safety and health which the code is trying to establish. Generally, where there is a violation of the code, the occupant as well as the owner may be held responsible and the responsibility of one will not relieve the other from performing his duties under the code.

Where will rooming houses be allowed?

Newark's zoning ordinances permit rooming houses to be located only in third and fourth residential districts and in all commercial and all industrial districts. Rooming houses are prohibited in first and second residential districts. This prohibition will continue. Adoption of the proposed rooming house ordinance will not change these zoning regulations.